



Sharon Grierson MP
Federal Member for Newcastle



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**UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE:
BLAMING OTHERS WON'T FIX THE PROBLEM, MINISTER**

The Minister for Education has again refused to provide any assistance to lessen the impact of 450 job losses at the University of Newcastle, failing to answer questions in Parliament on the matter from Sharon Grierson, Member for Newcastle.

A simple question was put by Ms Grierson to the Education Minister today: "what steps will the Minister now take to ensure the ongoing viability of the University of Newcastle, to save jobs in our region and prevent further damage to our regional economy?"

The Minister gave a long answer, but he could have summed up the Government's response in one word: "nothing".

No restoration of the \$3.7 million in regional funding to the University of Newcastle.

No deferral or waiver of the repayment of \$13 million from the Uni to the Education Department.

No plan to manage the job losses over a three year period, rather than twelve months.

Instead, the Minister again refused to take any responsibility or show any leadership, claiming the problem was entirely of the University's own making. What the Minister fails to understand is that, irrespective of who wears the blame, it is the whole of the community which is going to wear the pain.

These are real jobs, real people's lives, and this is going to have a real impact on our region.

With business and consumer confidence falling in the region, the Government must detail a plan to protect the economy from the loss of 450 jobs and the predicted flow-on effect of a further 150 job losses.

The Education Minister must provide a sensible response, rather than continuing to ignore the Hunter region, which has united in its call to protect our University and the contribution it makes to our regional economy.

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